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Chat with Rossini.

BY FERDINAND HILLER.

Translated for this Journal from the *Zeitung* of Cologne.

III.

—What MOMBELLI family was that, for which you composed *Demetrio e Polibio*? I began in the evening. Families, for whom one writes operas, are not found very often.

—MOMBELLI was an excellent tenor, said ROSSINI; he had two daughters, one of whom sang soprano, the other contralto. They associated a basso with them, to complete the vocal quartet, and, without further help, gave operatic representations in Bologna, Milan, and other cities. They first appeared in this way in Bologna, in a little, but very pretty opera by PORTOGALLO.

—A Portuguese composer?

—O no, an Italian. He was not without talent, and understood how to treat the voice parts particularly well. Many distinguished singers were very partial to his compositions. My first wife, MME. COLBRAN, had some forty pieces of his in her repertoire. The way I became acquainted with Mombelli was quite pleasant, and since you take an interest in my little history, I will relate it to you.

—Tell it, maestro, I beg you.

—Though still a boy (I was thirteen years old) I was already a warm admirer of the fair sex. One of my early friends, protectresses, how shall I call it? wanted to have an aria out of that opera produced by the Mombellis. I went to the copyist and begged him to write it out for her, but he refused. Then I applied to Mombelli himself, but he also put me off. You can't help yourself, said I to him; I will hear the opera again this evening, and write down all I like of it. We will see, said Mombelli. But I, undaunted,

listen to the opera once more with all attention, and then put a complete piano-forte arrangement of it upon paper and take it to Mombelli. He would not believe his eyes, cried out treachery on the part of the copyist, and what not. If you will not believe this, said I, I will hear the opera a couple of times more and then write down the full score, but under your own eyes. My great, and in this case, perfectly justified self-confidence conquered his suspicion, and we became good friends.

—I have often had occasion to convince myself of your extraordinary musical memory, said I; but to write down a whole opera, that is altogether astonishing.

—It was no score like the *Nozze di Figaro*—but I may well boast of my strong musical memory at that time.

—A peculiar gift! I have known great musicians who did not know by heart their own compositions, which had been played a hundred times, while others carried about whole libraries in their head. MENDELSSOHN belonged to the latter class; he once accompanied BACH's Passion music from memory.

—With the oratorios of HAYDN, said Rossini, I would have undertaken to do that when a young man. The "Creation," especially, I knew by heart even to the least bit of Recitative; to be sure I had accompanied and played it through often enough.

—But I must come back again to *Demetrio e Polibio*, maestro. You see I have a turn for archaeology. Did Mombelli, then, commission you to write this opera?

—He gave me words now for a duet, now for an arietta, and paid me a couple of piastres for each piece, which spurred me up to great activity. So I had got out my first opera before I knew it. My singing master, BABINI, gave me much good advice about it. He had a particular and passionate dislike to certain melodic figures then in vogue, and he used all his eloquence to make me avoid them.

—A quartet from this *Demetrio* had a sort of celebrity when I was in Italy, and was particularly cited as a proof of your early maturity. And did you do nothing more to it, afterwards, when the opera came upon the stage?

—I was not present; Mombelli gave it at Milan, unbeknown to me. What people admired particularly in that quartet was the fact, that it ended without the usual closing cadence, with a sort of exclamation of the voice parts. There is also a duet in it, which was much sung for a long time; it was very easy, and that is a great thing.

—You grew up, maestro, in the midst of singing and the stage; as you had a fine voice, it is sin-

gular that you never thought of becoming a stage singer.

—I thought of nothing else, my dear friend; but I wanted to become more thoroughly grounded in my art, than most of the singers I then knew. It was an easy matter. I already at an early age filled the place of *Mäestro al Cembalo*; transposing and arranging came occasionally, my attempts at composition met with favor, and so I fell almost by accident into the career of the composer. I adhered to that, although I had opportunity from the first to see how immeasurably better paid the singers were, than one of us.

—That heaven knows! BEETHOVEN hardly got as much for his collective works, as they give CRUVELLI at the Grand Opera.

—They were not quite so crazy then as they are now, to be sure, but there is little change; if the composer got 50 ducats, the singer received 1,000, said Rossini in a vexed tone. I confess I never could help smarting under the sense of this injustice, and often enough have I vented my ill humor against the singers. You good-for-nothings, I would say to them, who don't know how to sing as well as I do, and yet earn more in an evening than a whole score brings me in! But what good did that do! The German composers, too, do not grow rich!

—By no means, maestro! But they get situations, which, if they do not pay brilliantly, yet make one easy about the necessities of life. Upon the income of his operas no German composer ever could have lived. But it seems better now in Italy than formerly.

—Incomparably better. The earlier Italian opera composers could write God knows how many operas, only to live in want. With me it was scarcely otherwise, until my engagement with BARBAJA.

—*Tancredi* was the first opera of yours that really made its way, maestro; how much did you receive for it?

—Five hundred francs! And when I wrote my last Italian opera, the *Semiramide*, in Venice, and bargained to receive 5,000 francs for it, I was looked upon not only by the management, but by the whole public, as a sort of highway robber.

—You have the consolation, that singers, theatre managers and music publishers have become rich through you.

—A pretty consolation! Except during my stay in England, I have never made enough through my art, to be able to lay up anything. And in London I made money not as a composer, but as an accompanist.

—Yet, it was *because* you were a famous composer!

—So my friends told me, to persuade me to it.

It may have been a prejudice, but I had a sort of repugnance to receiving pay for accompanying on the piano, and I have only done it in London. Moreover, they only wanted to get a peep at my nose, and hear my wife sing. For our participation in musical soirées I had fixed the rather high price of fifty pounds—We took part in about sixty such soirées—that was well worth the pains. In London, too, musicians do all sorts of things to make money, and I have had some queer experiences there.

—One often cannot trust his eyes there, and still less his ears, said I.

—For instance, continued Rossini, they told me, the first time I undertook the accompaniment at one of those soirées, that PUZZI, the famous hornist, and DRAGONETTI, the still more famous contrabassist, would be present also. I supposed of course, that they would play a solo. But no such thing! they were to help me accompany. Have you, then, accompanying parts for all the pieces? I asked them. God forbid! was the reply; but we are handsomely paid and we accompany as we think fit. These improvised attempts at instrumentation, however, were rather dangerous to me; so I asked Dragonetti to content himself with snapping a few *pizzicatos*, when I winked my eye, and Puzzi, to strengthen the closing cadences with some tones, which he, as a good musician, found quite easy. In that way it went on without any further bad mistakes, and everybody was contented.

—Delightful! But the English, as it seems to me, have made great progress in a musical regard. Nowadays they bring out a great deal of good music in London,—they perform it well and listen to it with attention—that is to say in public concerts. In the saloons music always plays a mournful part, and many utterly untalented men strut there with incredible audacity, and give instruction in matters of which they understand next to nothing.

—I knew in London a certain X., who had made a great fortune as teacher of the piano-forte and singing, said Rossini; all he understood was how to blow the flute a little and quite wretchedly. Another, who had an immense run as a singing teacher, did not even know the notes. He kept an accompanist, who had to drum over to him beforehand the pieces which he afterwards taught, and who accompanied in the lessons; but he had a fine voice.

—You are of the opinion, perhaps, maestro, that really good singing masters are among the rare phenomena? They are even obliged to form the instrument with which the music must be made—a doubly difficult task!

—Most of the important singers of recent times, replied Rossini, have owed their talent more to their happy nature than to cultivation. Such was RUBINI, such was PASTA and many others. The peculiar art *del bel canto* ceased with the *castrati*; this one must admit, although we may not wish them back again. To these people their art had to be their all, and so they expended the most assiduous industry, the most unwearied care upon their cultivation. They always became competent musicians, and when their voices failed, at least excellent teachers.

—Who are the best singing teachers, with whom you are acquainted now? I asked.

—I esteem PIER MARINI in Paris very highly. LAMBERTI in Florence understands admirably

how to prepare one, who is no longer a beginner, for the stage. Have you an able teacher at your Conservatory in Cologne?

—Our REINTHALER understands his business, as few in Germany; moreover he is a distinguished composer. But I have a proposition to make to you, maestro?

—What may that be?

—Do you undertake a singing class in our music school—I should have to do something too for you. You shall have three hundred thalers salary and free lodgings to-boot. Is not that enticing?

—In the highest degree, my good Ferdinando; we will speak of particulars hereafter.

[To be continued.]

Life of John Sebastian Bach;

WITH A CRITICAL VIEW OF HIS COMPOSITIONS, BY J. N. FORKEL.

(Continued from p. 67.)

Through this admirable system of teaching, all Bach's scholars became great artists, some indeed greater than others according to the degree of instruction they received, or their subsequent opportunities and encouragements to improve upon or apply it. His two eldest sons, however, William Friedemann, and C. Ph. Emanuel, were the most distinguished among them; certainly not because he bestowed more pains on them than on his other pupils, but because they had from their earliest youth opportunities of hearing in their father's house much good music and no other; whereas others, before they could participate in his instructions, had either heard nothing good, or were already spoiled by bad or common compositions. And it is a proof of the goodness of the school that, notwithstanding these disadvantages, even these pupils all acquired a great proficiency in their art, and distinguished themselves in one or other of its branches. His oldest scholar was John Caspar Vogler, who received instructions of him at Arnstadt and at Weimar. He was, by his master's own testimony, a very able performer on the organ. He became organist of Weimar, and afterwards burgomaster of that city, still, however, retaining his post of organist. Some choral preludes for an organ with two rows of keys and a pedal were composed by him and published in 1737. Bach's other pupils who obtained celebrity were 1st. Homilius in Dresden, not only an excellent organist, but a celebrated composer of church music. 2nd. Franschel in Dresden. He was a fine performer on the clavier, and a very good teacher.—There are six polonaises by him in manuscript which, except those of William Friedemann, excel all polonaises in the world. 3rd. Goldberg, from Konigsberg. He was a very clever performer on the clavier, but had no decided talent for composition. 4th. Krebs, organist at Altenberg. He was not only a very good organ player, but a prolific composer of organ, clavier, and church music. He was fortunate enough to enjoy for nine years the benefit of Bach's instructions. 5th. Altnikol, organist at Naumburg, the son-in-law of his master. He was, it is said, a very able organist and composer. 6th. Agricola, Prussian court composer. He was less reputed for his compositions, than for his knowledge of the theory of music. He translated Tosi's "Instructions for Singing," from the Italian into German, and enriched the work with some acute observations. 7th. Mithel, in Riga. He was a skilful player on the clavier, and also composed for that instrument, of which his "Duet for two Clavichords," and his sonatas, which appeared still earlier, afford proofs. 8th. Kirnberger, court musician to the Princess Amelia of Prussia, at Berlin. He was one of the most distinguished of Bach's scholars, full of the most useful zeal, and genuine enthusiasm for his art. The world is indebted to him, not only for his development of Bach's method of teaching composition, but also for the first and only tenable system of harmony, which he has gathered from his master's practical works, entitled "True Principles for the

Use of Harmony." He has rendered service to the art by other writings and compositions, as well as by teaching. The Princess Amelia was herself his pupil. 9th. Kittel, organist in Erfurt. He is a very solid if not a very fluent player. He distinguished himself, however, by the composition of several trios for the organ, which are so excellent that his master himself would not have been ashamed of them. He is the only pupil of Bach's now (1802) living. 10th. Voigt, in Ansbach, and also an organist by the name of Schubert, were named to me by C. Ph. Emanuel, as scholars of his father; but all that he knew of them was that they came into his father's house after he had left it. I have already said that Bach's sons were his most distinguished pupils. The eldest, William Friedemann, came nearest to his father in the originality of his ideas. All his melodies have a different turn from those of other composers, and yet they are at the same time as natural as they are ingenious and elegant; and when played with the delicacy with which he himself performed them they cannot but enchant every real lover of music. It is only to be regretted that he preferred playing from his fancy to committing his thoughts to paper, as therefore his compositions are but few. C. Ph. Emanuel ranks next to him. He went early into the great world, and thence learned how to compose for a numerous public. In the clearness and intelligence of his melodies, therefore, he makes some approaches to the popular style, but he never descends to become common. Both the elder sons frankly acknowledged to having been obliged to form a style of their own, as they could never have hoped to rival their father in his. John Christopher Frederic, master of the concerts at the court of Buckeburg, imitated Emanuel's style, but not equal to his brother. He was, however, according to the testimony of William Friedemann, the most skilful performer of all the brothers, and one who played most readily his father's compositions for the clavier. John Christian, called Bach of Milan, and afterwards of London, being the youngest son of the second marriage, had not the advantage of having the instructions of his father. The original spirit of the Bachs is not therefore in any of his works; he became nevertheless a popular composer, and was universally admired in his day.

CHAPTER VII.

Bach not only distinguished himself as a performer, composer, and teacher of music, but had besides the merit of being an excellent father, friend and citizen. These virtues he displayed in the careful education of his children, the conscientious discharge of every civil and social duty. His acquaintance was desired by everybody; and every sincere lover of his art, whether foreigner or native, was free to visit his house, and sure to meet a kind reception. All his high reputation and social virtues seldom left his house without visitors. He was an artist extremely modest and, notwithstanding the superiority he possessed, and could not but feel over the rest of the profession, and in spite of the admiration and respect constantly shown for his talents, he was never known to assume upon it. When asked how he acquired so great a mastery of his art, he used generally to reply: "I was compelled to be industrious; and whoever is equally industrious will succeed equally well." He did not seem to pay much regard to his great natural genius. His opinions of other artists and their works were always just and liberal. Many works necessarily appeared to him trifling, because he was almost exclusively engaged on the higher branches of the art, yet he never permitted himself to express a harsh opinion of them, unless to his pupils, to whom he thought himself obliged to speak the real unvarnished truth. Still less did he suffer his consciousness of his own superiority to seduce him into bravado, such as is too often practised by a great performer when he thinks he has an inferior to deal with.

So far did he carry his modesty in this respect, that he never voluntarily mentioned the musical contest he had with Marchand, though in this case he was not the challenger. Many absurd tricks are related of him, as that, for instance, he some-

times dressed himself like a village schoolmaster, and, going into a church, begged the organist to allow him to play a psalm tune, for the sake of enjoying the astonishment of those present at his performance, and to lead the organist to say that he must be either Bach or the devil, &c., but these tales are evidently mere inventions. He himself disowned everything of the kind. He had too much respect for his art thus to toy with it; besides, an artist like Bach does not thus throw himself away. In musical parties, where he was not otherwise engaged, he used to have great pleasure in playing the tenor in quartets or other concerted pieces. With this instrument he was placed, as it were, in the middle of the harmony, whence he could best hear and enjoy it on all sides. Sometimes, when an occasion presented itself at such parties, he would accompany a trio on the harpsichord. And sometimes, if in a cheerful mood, when he knew that the composer, if he chanced to be present, would not like it amiss, he would extemporize out of the figured bass a new trio, or of three single parts make a quartet. It was in this manner alone he proved to others how strong he was. A certain Hurlebusch, of Brunswick, a vain and arrogant clavi-chord player, once came to visit him at Leipzig, not to hear him play, but to let himself be heard. Bach received him kindly, and listened with polite attention to his very indifferent performance, and when on his taking leave he presented Bach's eldest sons with a printed collection of sonatas, urging them to study them with diligence (they who had studied things so superior!) the father only smiled to himself, without in any way altering his behavior to the conceited stranger.

He was fond of hearing music of other composers. In a church if he heard a fugue for a full orchestra, and one of his two eldest sons chanced to stand near him, he always, as soon as he had heard the introduction to the theme, told him beforehand what the composer ought to introduce, or what he possibly would introduce, and if the composition, was a good one, it happened as he had predicted, and he rejoiced and joggled his son's elbow to make him remark it. This too is a proof that he valued the ability of others. We have already named the composers whom he admired and studied in his youth. As he advanced in age, and his judgment became more matured, he had other favorites, such as Fux, the leader of the emperor's band, Handel, Caldara, Rhein, Kayser, Hasse, the two Grauns, Telemann, Zefuka, Benda, and he was well acquainted with all the distinguished composers of the time, living at Dresden and Berlin; personally, with all but the four first named. In his youth he was very intimate with Telemann. He had a very great esteem for Handel and desired much to be personally acquainted with him. As Handel was a great performer on the clavi-chord, and organs, many amateurs in Leipzig and its neighborhood wished to hear these two great men together. But Handel could never find time for such a meeting. Three times he came from London to Halle, his native town. His first visit was about the year 1719; Bach was then at Coethen, only four German miles from thence, and when informed of Handel's arrival he lost not a moment in paying him a visit; but Handel had left Halle the very day that Bach entered it.

At the time of Handel's second visit, somewhere between 1730 and 1740, Bach was lying ill at Leipzig; he however immediately dispatched his eldest son, William Freidemann, to Halle, with a very pressing invitation to Handel to come and visit him at Leipzig; but much to their mutual regret Handel could not do so. At Handel's third visit to Halle in 1752 or 1753, Bach was dead. Thus, his wish to be personally acquainted with Handel was not gratified, any more than that of numerous others who would have gladly seen and heard these two great geniuses together. At the period when Hasse was director of the chapel at Dresden, both it and the opera there were very effective and brilliant. Bach had there from his earliest years many acquaintances and devoted admirers. Hasse and his wife, the celebrated Faustina, came several times to Leipzig, attracted by their admiration for his great talents. He

was, therefore, always received most honorably at Dresden, and frequently went thither to hear the opera, generally taking with him his eldest son. He used to say to him jestingly before his departure: "Freidemann, shall we go again and hear the pretty Dresden songs?" Innocent as was the remark in itself, he would not, I am convinced, have made it to any one but his sons, who already knew perfectly how to distinguish between what is really great in Art and what is merely pretty and pleasing. Bach did not make what is called a brilliant fortune; he held, indeed, a lucrative office, but he had a numerous family to maintain and educate, and he neither had nor sought other resources. He was too entirely engrossed by his office and his art to think of pursuing those means which, for a man like him, and especially in his times, lead to wealth.

If he had chosen to travel he would, as even his enemies allow, have attracted the admiration of the whole world. But he preferred a quiet, domestic life, the constant and uninterrupted occupation afforded him by his art, and was, moreover, as we have said of his ancestors, contented with a moderate competency. Notwithstanding this he, however, enjoyed during his life very many proofs, not only of love and friendship, but of respect and honor. Prince Leopold of Coethen, Duke Ernest Augustus of Weimar, and Duke Christian of Weissenfels, were all most sincerely attached to him, which was the more honorable to him, as the princes were not mere lovers, but also good judges of music. At Berlin and Dresden he was universally honored and respected. And if we add to this the admiration of those connoisseurs who heard him, and were acquainted with his music, it may be easily supposed that a man like Bach, "who sang only for himself and the muses," had received from the hands of Fame all he could desire, and of a sort that had more charms for him, than the doubtful honors of a ribbon or a golden chain. It would be scarcely worth the mentioning that, in 1747, he became a member of the "Society of the Musical Sciences," founded by Mitzler, did we not owe to this circumstance his beautiful choral melody: "Vom Himmel Hoch, &c." He presented this melody on his admission to the society, and afterwards had it engraved.

[To be continued.]

For Dwight's Journal of Music.

Scraps of Musical History.

At the first Quintette Club concert we were favored with a very pleasing Andante, composed by BERNARD CRUSELL, for clarinet, with quartet accompaniment. Perhaps few, if any of the audience, ever heard of the composer before. Being myself among the number of the ignorant, I looked into Fétis's Dictionary, and there found that Crussell is a distinguished clarinetist, at present attached to the chapel of the King of Sweden. That he was born in Finland in 1778, studied in Berlin, and afterwards resided in Hamburg, until he finally removed to Stockholm. His published compositions are all for the clarinet, obligato or concertante.


There is another person connected with the history of music at a much earlier period, of whom, perhaps, many of your readers have never heard. I refer to the man who originated concert-giving in London; the man who sold coal about the streets out of a sack, which he carried on his back; the man who was distinguished as a chemist, as a biblioplist, who associated with noblemen and gentlemen, when his day's work was done; who was never ashamed of his humble calling, but laid aside the coal sack to devote himself to the examination of curious books, or to listen to, or perform in, one of the concerts which he originated.

This man, whose history is among the most

curious of his times, was THOMAS BRITTON, "the famous Musical Small Coal Man," as Hearnes's Appendix styles him. "Hearnes's account is given by one who knew him well," says Hawkins. He was born about the year 1654, and having come up to London very young, from Northamptonshire, apprenticed himself to a Small Coal man. His apprenticeship lasted seven years, and he then returned home, having received a sum of money from his master not to practice his trade. Having spent his money, he however returned to London and rather dishonestly broke his promise, by commencing the charcoal business on his own account, having hired a stable which he converted into a dwelling house. He spent his leisure hours with the "savans" and artists, whose acquaintance he had made.

His neighbor, Dr. Garancier, taught him chemistry, and Britton even constructed a moveable laboratory, which was highly approved of by all who saw it. When not occupied by chemical studies he visited the bookstore of a certain Christopher Bateman, when leaving his empty coal sack upon the "bulk" of the shop window, he joined the lovers of book-lore who assembled there, and often afterwards adjourned with them to dine at "the Morning Bush at Aldergate." He had a passion for music; "played on the viol di gamba, and could tune a harpsichord." And his Collection of Music, copied by himself, was so considerable, that at his death it was sold for £100. Britton's concerts were given in the upper rooms of his own house, the lower being filled with charcoal. It was situated on the south side of Aylesbury street. The stairs leading to the upper story were on the outside of the house, and the ceiling of the room was so low that a tall man could hardly stand upright in it. Here with the co-operation of Sir ROGER L'ESTRANGE, "a very musical gentleman," he soon had for his audiences on concert days the most brilliant society of London. Noblemen and gentlemen, duchesses and marchionesses crowded with enthusiasm to the concerts of the charcoal man. At first Britton refused to receive money for admission to them, but he was obliged in order to pay his expenses, to fix a sum of ten shillings a year as the subscription price, and then allowed his visitors coffee at one cent a cup. HANDEL often played the harpsichord there, assisted by the most skilful musicians of the day. Fétis says that Britton played himself upon the "clavecin," but Dr. Hawkins tells us that it has been questioned whether he played upon any musical instrument. Hawkins gives an immense catalogue of the music sold from his library after his death. In it we find the works of PURCELL, CORELLI, Dr. CROFT, LOCK (the author of the "Macbeth" music), &c., &c., which may serve to show what sort of music was performed at his concerts.

His cry of Small Coal was a perfect consonance,

the octave  and he was so

well known that when passing through the streets "in his blue linen frock, with his sack of coal on his back, he was frequently accosted with such expressions as these: There goes the famous Small Coal Man, who is a lover of learning, a performer in music, and a companion of gentlemen."

His life appeared so singular to many people, that they scrupled not to bestow upon him the

epithets of Conspirator, Atheist, Jesuit, and Magician.

His death was as singular as his life.

Mr. Holt, a magistrate of Middlesex, who often formed one of Britton's audiences, introduced a blacksmith named Honeyman, who was a ventriloquist, into his house, in order to frighten our poor friend. A deep and solemn voice, crying out, as if from the invisible world, announced to Britton that his end was near, unless he fell upon his knees, and recited the Lord's Prayer. The poor man fell upon his knees indeed, but could not proffer a syllable for very fright. His tongue clove to the roof of his mouth, and being carried to his bed, he died some days after, in the year 1714, aged 60 years. His concerts had lasted for forty years, and, as the first established in London, are of great interest. Under a print of him are written, by Mr. JOHN HUGHES, who had frequently played at his concerts, the following lines which may serve instead of an epitaph.

Though mean thy rank, yet in thy humble cell,
Did gentle Peace and Arts unpurchased dwell;
Well pleased, Apollo thither led his train,
And Musick warbled in her sweetest strain.
Cyllenius so, as Fables tell, and Jove
Came willing guests to poor Philemon's Grove.
Let useless Pomp behold, and blush to find
So low a Station, such a liberal Mind.

C. C. P.

Mlle. NANTIER DIDIEE. — Of this new prima donna contralto at the New York Academy, the *Mirror* gathers the following notices from *The Ent' Acte*, a gossiping little sheet distributed gratuitously amongst the audience.

She is a native of St. Denis, in the Isle of Bourbon, and was born in 1832—consequently she is now in her twenty-third year. At an early age she exhibited a remarkable fondness for music, and became, when quite young, a student in the *Conservatoire*, in Paris, having Duprez, the renowned French tenor, as her master. In due course, she debuted at the Academie, and obtained the most marked success. But the peculiar quality of her voice required a wider scope for action than French opera afforded; and on the earnest advice of friends and professors of eminence, she determined to forsake the French for the Italian lyric stage. She therefore proceeded to Italy, and, after completing the necessary studies, made her first appearance at the Theatre Carignano, Turin, in the rôle of Pippo, in *La Gazza Ladra*. Her success was beyond the most sanguine anticipations of those on whose advice she had acted; and her subsequent performance of Giulia, in *La Vestale*, so thoroughly confirmed it, that offers were immediately made her from all parts of Italy; but these she declined, preferring to accept a brilliant engagement as prima donna in an Italian company then about to give representations in the principal cities in France. While performing at Lyons, M. Corti, the Director of the Italian Opera, Paris, arrived there for the purpose of judging of her merits, her fame having already reached the capital, and was so delighted with her performance, that he tendered her an engagement, and succeeded in getting her current one cancelled. She appeared at the Italian Opera as The Duchess, in *Luisa Miller*; and notwithstanding the slight interest attached to this rôle, she made so much of it that her efforts were greeted with enthusiastic applause. Mr. Gye, the Director of the Royal Italian Opera in London, was then in Paris, in search of new artists to commence his season with. He heard of Mlle. Didiée, and was so satisfied of the success she would achieve in the English capital, that he gave M. Corti a handsome consideration to surrender her engagement to him. The opening character at Covent Garden was Armando, in *Maria di Rohan*; this was in 1853, and one of the leading journals remarks of her voice:

"The crisp distinctness of delivery which marked the few words of 'Gondi,' preclusive of the *Per non istare all' ozio*, scarcely prepared us for the finish, the precision, the facility of execution, and the rare natural quality of voice, with which this popular *morceau* was executed. The house unanimously called the *cantatrice* at the close of the first refrain.

She next appeared as Maffeo Orsini, in *Lucrezia Borgia*—and the London Times says:

"Mlle. Nantier Didiée—next to Alboni, the best Maffeo Orsini we have heard at the Royal Italian Opera—sang the famous *brindisi*, 'Il segreto per esser felice,' with great spirit, and was unanimously encored. But still more to our liking was the plaintive romance in the first scene, 'Nella fatal di Rimini,' which was given by Mlle. Didiée with an unobtrusiveness of style that betrayed a strong artistic sentiment. On the fall of the curtain, she was recalled, with Madame Grisi, and well deserved the honor."

At the close of the season, she accepted a re-engagement for the following year, and in the interim proceeded to France and Belgium. During the season of 1854, she continued to win the plaudits of London audiences, and subsequently visited Madrid, where she achieved a great triumph in the part of the gipsy Azucena in *Il Trovatore*, and Climene in *Saffo*. During the past season Mlle. Didiée accompanied Madame Grisi and Mario in a professional tour through England, Scotland, and Ireland, and everywhere called forth the highest eulogiums from the press.

The lady has a highly attractive personal appearance, and is altogether the most beautiful and charming artiste that has ever visited America. She is a perfect blonde, and her face is not only strikingly handsome, but highly intellectual. Her manners are remarkably graceful and lady-like. Her voice is a highly cultivated *contralto*, of immense range; indeed, so extensive is its compass, that she can sing soprano and mezzo-soprano parts without difficulty, and is unquestionably, with the exception of Alboni, the greatest contralto in the world.

Musical Correspondence.

NEW-YORK, NOV. 27. — It was a matter of life and death to penetrate through the dense crowd that filled the vestibule of Niblo's theatre on Saturday, the night of our first PHILHARMONIC concert, and at a very early hour every nook and corner of the house was occupied. This is of course encouraging, but holds out a dire prospect of future inconvenience and loss of much time to the audience, unless a larger house be taken. The concert was, as a whole, quite satisfactory, although some single features might be found fault with. The orchestral pieces were the "Pastoral Symphony," GLUCK's Overture to *Iphigenia in Aulis*, and WAGNER's to *Tannhäuser*. The first was well and spiritedly played, with the exception of the Andante, in which some confusion in the time was observable. Some call the Pastoral the most insignificant and least interesting of BEETHOVEN's Symphonies—but I cannot find it so,—there is a gushing freshness, a cheerful repose in it that makes it actually sound like the country, and which vividly recalled to me all the last summer's placid rural enjoyments. Between the two overtures there was a strange contrast, the one so crowded with full instrumental effect—the other appearing almost meagre in a close comparison, and yet so severely, chastely beautiful. I think it was taken rather too slow, although, as I hear, the tempo was fixed by Wagner; but I like it better when played more rapidly, as I heard it from one of the first orchestras in Germany. The *Tannhäuser*, and Mr. BERGMANN's conception of it you know much better than we do. I can tell you nothing new about it, but only express my regret at its having been placed at the end of the programme, and that not even its popularity could prevent many persons from leaving during its perfor-

mance. In addition to these pieces by the orchestra, the brothers MOLLENAUER gave us a duet, and Edward Mollenhauer a solo, both of their own composition. This was hardly appropriate for a Philharmonic concert: it is a great pity that these gifted brothers do not apply their really admirable talent to something higher than mere trickery and effect. The solo was particularly full of these; it was called "La Sylphide"—but can you tell me whether sylphs were ever known to dance polkas? For the final *motif* of this piece was unquestionably a good, danceable polka. Mr. OTTO FEDER, who sang the beautiful Bass Aria from MENDELSSOHN's "St. Paul," and a couple of songs by DESSAUER and SCHUBERT, has a voice of good quality, but small compass, and unfortunately sings out of tune very often, particularly whenever the voice comes in again after a bit of instrumental symphony. What I admired most in his performance, was his remarkably distinct enunciation; but that was all lost on the greater part of the audience, as he sang in German.

Concerts come thick and fast now. For to-day I have to record MASON and BERGMANN's first Matinée, which took place this afternoon (rather paradoxical, that!). There was quite a good audience assembled, and I, for one, enjoyed myself very much, notwithstanding that the *ensemble* performance was not entirely satisfactory. But as this may be ascribed, in a great measure, to short practice which the players have had together, and this is a fault which is constantly being remedied, the least said about it the better. The opening piece, and the gem of the concert, was SCHUBERT's posthumous Quatuor. I had long known it well from ROBERT FRANZ's pianoforte arrangement of it, and was highly gratified at this opportunity of hearing the original. It is one of the most characteristic of Schubert's works, full of originality, in the lovely, flowing Allegro, the crisp, pert Scherzo, and rushing, breathless Finale, as well as in the heavenly theme of the Andante, which, with its few, simple modulations and chords, and almost monotonous melody, yet seems to bring peace and rest to our souls, and leave room for none but good and pure thoughts. Mr. Mason played several solo pieces—a *Fantaisie Impromptu* by CHOPIN, and a couple of short, pretty little Preludes of STEPHEN HELLER—exceedingly well. In the first, particularly, one of the composer's most dreamy, delicate effusions, he adapted himself entirely to the true spirit of the work. Besides these he played some Variations by Mendelssohn, with Bergmann (violinello), and took part in the Trio by BRAHMS, the Man of the Future. I can hardly judge of this composition on a first hearing, and with no previous acquaintance with the style of its author. Suffice it to say that I was agreeably disappointed in not finding it as difficult to understand as I had anticipated, and in its very pleasing and original melodies. Mr. FEDER sang the Aria from "Tannhäuser": *O du mein holder Abendstern!* which cannot be at all appreciated without an orchestral accompaniment. Also a very florid and brilliant song by O. NICOLAI. The remarks made above apply also to this gentleman's singing at to-day's concert, and I would add to them the regret that he should sing so many compositions which reach above the agreeable compass of his voice, and thus injure its quality as well as its effect.

PHILADELPHIA, DEC. 3. — I was absent from the city last week, and unable to send you my customary report; indeed I returned only in time to attend the PYNE Concert on Friday evening last.

The hall was full, and Miss LOUISA PYNE was applauded to the echo each time she sang; she is the best vocalist of the brilliant execution school who has visited the United States in English opera; others have had better voices, but none such good training. The programme was principally selected

from BRISTOW's opera, "Rip Van Winkle"; one duet and five ballads, all pretty, pleasing and very much like each other; no one can complain that Mr. Bristow did not write them all at one inspiration. They were all good, all singable, but in the most common place song style; such songs as one expects when Ethiopian Minstrels sing with unblackened faces. Mr. STRETTON's song of "The Tears of the Vine," has,—as the *Tribune* remarked,—not a solitary bibulous trait in it, but is more like a sentimental ditty about the tears of the heart, or some such tombstone music. The second part of the concert was from different composers—"Rode's Air," "The Skylark," "We may be happy yet," "The Bay of Dublin," &c.; nearly everything was encored by the good-natured audience, which even put up with Harrison's nasal efforts; he gave as an *encore* to "We may be happy yet" the favorite "Thou'lt remember me," laying peculiar stress upon the last pronoun, as if there was any danger of the audience being fortunate enough to forget him. The only blot on the programme was a comic song from HORNCastle, more suited for the saw-dust and pea-nuts of a circus, than the Musical Fund Hall.

On Saturday evening the Musical Fund Society gave its second Concert, with BRIGNOLI, ALDINI, HENSLE, and GOTTSCHALK. The orchestra was out of tune and out of practice, and completely spoiled all the accompaniments; the overtures were tolerably performed,—"*La Violette*" by CARAFI, and LINDPAINTNER's "Vampire,"—the first light, the second heavy. Miss Hensler was warmly received. Gottschalk is getting more noisy than ever, breaking strings and pounding as if music had to be beaten out of the piano. His rendering of Chopin's delicate, sympathetic Funeral march and Scherzo, was nothing more than discreditable to any one pretending to the rank he claims; in his own compositions he can be listened to, in other people's he is less than indifferent. Brignoli was the bright particular star of the evening, though he deserved a scolding for keeping the audience waiting so long for him. Did you ever see anything to compare with Gottschalk's airs and graces? his piano moving, his gloves, his handkerchief, his upturned head and rolling eyes? all these affectations growing with his growth and strengthening with his strength.

The Musical Union will give the *Stabat Mater* on the 11th, with full orchestra, despite the loss of the C. K. M., who is endeavoring to start a society for his own personal benefit.

Another new Sacred Music Society has been formed, I hear, in the northern part of the city, called the Handel and Haydn; president, Mr. COOLIDGE, an amateur. MEIGEN is vocal instructor.

The Harmonia's second Concert is announced for Saturday evening. The feature is the new oratorio of "The cities of the Plain," by F. T. S. DARLEY, the organist of Christ Church (and a director of the Society.) It has been in rehearsal for two seasons, and is said to be a heavy work by those who have heard it,—his first Cantata of "Belshazzar" was anything but heavy, almost too light. Another feature of the concert is the "Marseilles Hymn," rather an odd anthem for a sacred concert. I shall lay myself out on this entertainment, as a native oratorio is a novelty. VERITAS.

BERLIN, OCT. 30. — It seemed like old times this evening, and I was carried back to Boston again, as ALFRED JAEHL took his seat at the piano, and scattered showers of tone-pearls upon the audience in "Armin's Saloon." I need say nothing about his playing, but the same life, spirit, and joyousness, that ever characterized him, are his characteristics still. He looks just as handsome, and happy as ever, nor have his twinkling fingers lost a jot of their lightning speed. Here is the programme, in the plain and primitive form of German programmes.

- 1) Trio for piano, violin and 'cello, in G minor, by RUBINSTEIN, played by the Royal Concert-masters Herren L. and M. GANZ and the CONCERT-GIVER.
- 2) Song piece.
- 3) a. Second Barcarole;
b. Prayer of Elizabeth, from Wagner's "Tannhäuser," Transcription;
c. Italian Serenade. } composed and played by the CONCERT-GIVER.
- 4) Song piece.
- 5) a. Prelude No. 15, by CHOPIN;
b. C minor Fugue, by BACH;
c. Scherzo in E♭ minor, by CHOPIN. } played by the CONCERT-GIVER.
- 6) Song piece.
- 7) Paraphrase, from Wagner's "Lohengrin" and "Tannhäuser," composed and played by the CONCERT-GIVER.

HERR JAEHL.

The songs were an air from GLUCK's "Orpheus." "Welcome" by CURSCHMANN, and "He is come" by FRANZ—sung by Fraulein JENNY MEYER, sister-in-law and pupil of STERN, the excellent head of the singing society bearing his name, and director at the Orchester-Verein Concert. Fraulein Meyer, a fine, large brunette, has one of the finest of the younger contralto voices in Berlin, and is destined, I think, to become a favorite oratorio singer.

As to Jaell, it is better to record part of RELLSTAB's notice of him, than to repeat what we Americans have so long and so often said.

"The Concert-giver" says he, "exhibited himself as a master of the first rank in three salon pieces, which he performed solo. * * * He played all three numbers, of greatly different character, with what may be called perfect beauty. * * * The bell-play in the Italian Serenade was a new and delicious effect. True, it was only play, but given in such perfection as to attain artistic rights."

The hall was well filled, and the applause was clearly heartfelt, which was specially pleasing to me as confirming the judgment passed upon the artist in America. Another point noticed by Rellstab, was the extreme beauty of tone which was drawn from the instrument, a characteristic which all Bostonians will remember.

From something that he said to me, I should not wonder if we by and by had Jaell as a permanent resident in Boston, a city of which he speaks with heartiest satisfaction and fond remembrance.

A. W. T.

Nov. 10. — What can I say? I am too excited, too much 'carried away,' and yet would fain record, that hereafter I may recall in some faint degree, the feelings with which I have heard CLARA SCHUMANN and JOACHIM again. Have I sneered at virtuosity? Never at such as this! Where and how to begin? The language of the critics is like Sanscrit to me. I can neither use it myself nor understand it in others. I must—as I can with truth—comprehend all technical description in one phrase—there are no difficulties to them in their respective instruments. What are difficulties to other performers are so easily overcome, are played with such perfect calmness and rest, and glide away so unnoticed from their fingers that you cannot think to wonder at them. Let me go back a week.

It was a concert with orchestra in the Sing Akademie. Again, as last winter, I found it so beautiful in them, when all was ready, to come down to their places in front of the orchestra, so modestly and simply as if the audience was but a meeting of friends—with no display, no evident wish to be greeted with applause, no zany-like contortions of body, nor tossing of heads, but quiet and calm in their strength, without anxiety, without triumph. The overture to Byron's "Manfred," led by that excellent director STERN, and played by our new 'Orchester Verein,' opened the concert. A powerful work, expressive of struggle and commotion of spirit. SCHUMANN's strong side, as it seems to me. Then followed his Concerto in A minor, for piano-forte and orchestra, which she played. I was badly seated to get the proper effect of the work, but not to see the mastery with which the pianist ruled her instru-

ment. What force and what delicacy! How wonderfully those handfuls of notes spoke out the deepest thoughts of Robert Schumann! Here a sigh, and there a tear—here the struggles of a giant, there the soothing voice of an angel. It is this wondrous power of entering into the very soul of the composer, which makes Clara Schumann what she is. Others can equal her in the technicalities of playing, but no woman approaches her in this thing.

I met a lady a day or two after, who asked me how Madame Schumann appeared?

"She seemed to me care-worn and sad; as well she may, poor woman!" said I.

"She appeared just so years ago, when she was a young girl, and came here to triumph over all," said the lady. "She never had a childhood. Her father was determined to make a virtuoso of her, and the joyousness of youth she never knew. Even then her countenance showed her secret sorrow."

Is not this the reason that she plays BEETHOVEN as no other living? Does she not feel that great struggling spirit in his music? does it not sympathize with her, and share every trouble, and soothe, and calm and speak peace? When she plays his music, you think no more of composer and performer than you do of SHAKESPEARE when reading his dramas. On this evening she only played some variations by the great master, in C minor. No mere finger-work, but full of feeling and beauty.

Joachim's first piece was a sonata for the violin solo, by BACH. I had heard it a day or two before, when he played it to an audience of two, curled up upon the lounge; and as he now stood up before the large audience, there was no change in his demeanor, no variation in his manner of playing; all was just as simple and unaffected as before, and what is the secret of this, but his love for the music? And truly I begin to have some faint conception of that man Bach's greatness. What power, depth and quaint beauty in this work! The first movement has a grand, sweeping power, producing an effect that one could hardly expect from the instrument. Then follows a quaint fugue, on four subjects, I think; but can that be possible? I heard it twice and hardly dare say it; and then an Adagio, full of soul, and a finale, capricious and wild, and full of technical difficulties hardly to be imagined. One never would imagine it from the manner of Joachim. RELLSTAB says of the performance: "The poet says:

'In him have I

The model of a perfect man beheld.'

"We can quote these words in relation to this artist, in whom we honor a model of perfect performance. Not the storm of applause at the close, but the breathless stillness during the piece praised him the most. In the solution of his problem not only did no note of the smallest importance fail him, but no stroke of power, no spark of fire, no breath of tenderness; it was the most perfect Daguerreotype of the work."

But it was in the last piece that I felt his mighty power to the fullest extent. This was that grand work of Beethoven's ripest years, the Concerto for violin and orchestra, op. 61, in D. I had heard it at a concert of the Orchester-Verein not long before, the solo by Concert-master LAUB, from Vienna. He had played it with distinguished skill and it had not failed of making its due impression. But now! Still as the tomb was that house, the audience being prepared for the noble orchestral opening by the delicate variations before mentioned, which immediately preceded it. This work was written at that period when Beethoven's genius proved in the fourth Symphony, that as a mere artist, a simple writer of music, he was behind none. So in this work the deep sorrow of the later period does not appear. The giant is there in the Allegro, but a giant rejoicing in his strength. What tenderness, what unheard-of depths of human feeling in the Larghetto!

"You need not be ashamed of your wet eyes," said

Miss G. to me, "there are many others here in the same state."

If Joachim would only put on a few artist airs, one could think of him; as it is, the stream of music carries us along with it and the very heart strings are vibrating to every tone of that marvellous instrument. If he would not be so calm and utterly buried in his own feelings, there would be some escape. But no. He seizes upon you by his very personal appearance, and after the first tones all escape from his enchantment is impossible. And so the *Larghetto* ended and the people waked from their trance—the magic bonds were loosed. The deepest feelings had been excited. The British Spy wondered how the audience of the blind preacher could be brought down from the pitch of excitement to which his eloquence had raised them. Had any one but Beethoven written that *Larghetto*, or had any other than Joachim played the Rondo (Finale), I should have feared like the British Spy. But when did Joachim's bow fail in placing just exactly the right thing after one of his heart-reaching, soul-thrilling *Andantes* or *Adagios*? With what abounding life and joyousness did the Rondo spring from beneath Joachim's bow! His own figure, calm as it was, seemed to feel in every nerve the change. The orchestra was inspired to a man, and the audience were electrified. That the "gloomy Beethoven!" This last movement is the very champagne of music; Joachim poured it out to us, until we were "like Bacchus, crowned and drunken!"

A. W. T.

Dwight's Journal of Music.

BOSTON, DEC. 8, 1855.

CONCERTS.

MENDELSSOHN QUINTETTE CLUB. The second concert, for which the Messrs. Chickering's Saloon was again filled with the best sort of an audience, on Tuesday evening, was one of the most interesting of the many feasts of classical "chamber music" for which we have been indebted to the Club for several winters past. The programme was of just about the right length, the pieces choice and in the main extremely well performed, and we perceived no signs of weariness unto the end. On the contrary, a quiet and keen relish, without any particular vehemence of outward applause, characterized the audience. Here is the programme:

PART I.

1. Quintet No. 5, in E Flat, Mozart.
Allegro—Tema con variazioni—Minuetto—Finale, Allegro.
2. Two German Songs:
a. "Der Neugierige," Schubert.
b. "Widmung," Schumann.
G. W. PRATT.
3. Quartet in E minor, No. 2, op. 44, Mendelssohn.
Allegro appassionato—Scherzo—Andante—Finale,
Presto agitato.

PART II.

4. Prayer; composed in 1667 by Alessandro Stradella.
G. W. PRATT.
5. Quartet in G, No. 2, op. 18, [first time,] Beethoven.
Allegro—Adagio cantabile and Allegro—Scherzo
Allegro—Finale, Presto.

The opening of MOZART's Quintet was somewhat marred by lack of perfect harmony in the strings and roughness in the upper part; but the fusion of the elements was more complete in the beautiful *Andante*, with its variations full of the subtlest invention and delicacy of Mozart; after which all went smoothly, and the playful, almost jolly finale, so child-like in its gayety, left the listeners with a fresh zest for what might follow.—The Quintet in E minor seemed to us one of the very best of MENDELSSOHN. There is such a depth of thoughtful sadness in the first movement,

that it seemed scarcely possible that it was composed at so early an age as the *opus* number would indicate. It tells of the deep experience of the tried and mature man. The Scherzo opened in that same *Midsummer Night's Dream* fairy vein, which is at once the most original creation of Mendelssohn's fancy, and one of his common-places to one who hears him much and meets it recurring in quartet, quintet, trio, overture, everywhere. But this time the idea is worked up with marvellous skill and interest as it goes on, and is really one of the happiest of his Scherzos. The finale, too, is admirable, in perfect keeping with the impassioned introductory movement. The whole Quartet was very finely played; the violoncello passages were singularly expressive.

That early Quartet of BEETHOVEN, in G, (how comes it that we have never had that before, having so often drawn from the treasures of that op. 18?) full of the cheerful strength of youthful genius, contrasted finely with the Mendelssohn, and made a most acceptable conclusion. It is as clear, and elegantly finished as Mozart in its structure, and in its spirit as musically abstract as Oublicheff himself could well desire. To the *Adagio*, with the moody interruption of a bit of *Allegro*, he might possibly take exception, as betraying the cloven foot of a dramatic tendency, which he would sacredly exclude from the Quartet; but it is a most beautiful *Adagio*, full of feeling.

The songs by Mr. PRATT revealed his conscientious Leipzig studies, and showed the talent of the singer to more advantage than the oratorio music in which alone he has before appeared. That *Widmung* (Dedication) of SCHUMANN, however, so passionate and so delicate, in which the lover calls the mistress of his heart: *mein guter Geist, mein bessres Ich*, was hardly suited to a heavy-moulded baritone voice, and being transposed so low, lost much of its fire and fineness, although it was rendered with chaste expression and gave evidence that the character of words and melody had been faithfully studied. The song by SCHUBERT, (from his charming cycle of songs, under the title of *Die Schöne Müllerin*), of the *Neugierige*, or curious lover, who questions the brook whether his love is returned, was a happier selection. But the most satisfactory was that old prayer of ALESSANDRO STRADELLA, of romantic memory, which, with quartet and flute accompaniment, had the charm of a deep-toned old painting by one of the religious masters. It was sung with true expression. The upper tones of Mr. Pratt's voice are quite musical, but his manly organ tone is not free from a certain huskiness, and yields reluctantly as it were to delicate and subtle modulations of feeling. There is the conscientious manner of the artist about him, and we rejoice that we have one who cultivates so earnestly and so intelligently the nobler treasures of the vocal art.

To accommodate those who would attend Mr. Thackeray's lectures, the third concert of the Club will take place on Monday, Dec. 17th.

HANDEL AND HAYDN SOCIETY.—Handel's "Solomon" drew a very large audience at the third performance. The choruses were finely sung. That "nightingale" serenade chorus, particularly, and that short one in G minor: *Draw the tear*, are among the most beautiful of all choruses, as others in the same work are of the most sublime. Of the solos, there are about two songs each in the parts of Mr. ARTHURSON, Mr. LEACH and Mr. PRATT, which improve

continually upon acquaintance. The latter gentleman sang: *What though I trace*, with much expression: the effect of that song is much heightened by a richer instrumentation than the rest; new orchestral parts having been tastefully added by Mr. HAYTER. More and more we are convinced that the dramatic scene of the two women adds only to the tedium of the performance.

VOCAL QUARTET. Quite an encouraging audience attended the old-fashioned English vocal medley of Messrs. ARTHURSON, LEACH, &c., at the Meionon, last Saturday evening. The programme was given in our paper last week. We were only present during the singing of an Italian-opera piece by Mrs. LEACH, substituted for the canzonet of Haydn; a French Romance, by CLAPISSON: "My soul to God, my heart to thee," a melody of much sweetness and pathos, finely sung by Mr. ARTHURSON; and a very good performance of an old English quartet: "Ye spotted snakes," by Mrs. Leach, Miss Twichell, Mr. Arthurson and Mr. Leach. These things have their admirers, and four good singers, singly or combined, are an attraction; but we must say that few things musical come over us with such a drowsy influence as a continuous succession of those English songs that charmed an older generation, before other music was much known among us.

Ferdinand Hiller.

The interesting conversations with ROSSINI which we have been publishing, will doubtless render some notice of the reporter of those conversations acceptable to the readers of the Journal. FERDINAND HILLER, like MENDELSSOHN, is of Jewish descent, the son of a rich Frankfort am Main gentleman, and was born there in 1812. His early inclination to music was fostered by his parents, by affording him every means of developing his talents and taste. The first public notice we find of him is of his appearance in Paris in 1829 as pianist, where he seems to have made a very good impression. Afterwards he returned to Germany and exhibited his command of his instrument in various places, but settled again in Paris in 1833. Five years later we find a notice of him in Milan; in 1842 he was in Rome; the next year he had come back to Fatherland and become a teacher in the new Conservatorium in Leipzig, where in 1844 he was one of the directors of the Gewand-house concerts. In 1847 he was called to Dresden as director of a series of subscription concerts, and soon after accepted the place of music director at Düsseldorf, whence he removed to Cologne. For the few past years he has been at the head of the new Conservatorium there, and is known as the director of the great Rhine musical festival at Düsseldorf.

Among his works are the operas "Conradin," "The Miller and his child" and "Romilda," performed in Milan. Neither of these seems to have had any great success. His oratorio, "The Destruction of Jerusalem," was much praised by the German papers. His works for the concert room are numerous,—overtures, two or three symphonies, and the like, and he has written much for the pianoforte and with a considerable degree of success.

We have not the means of judging very decidedly of the merit of his compositions, but at present incline to the opinion that they exhibit more knowledge and musical learning than original genius. Most composers of the highest rank have already made their mark firmly and decidedly before reaching the age to which Hiller has already arrived.

Musical Chat.

The music-lover in our city is bewildered by the announcements of concerts, great and small, which appeal to him on every side. There is danger that the thing will be overdone and that the regular series of concerts of the highest kind of music, which depend on large and regular patronage, may suffer through so many musical distractions. Surely there is no kind of musical entertainment in itself so interesting, so effectual in creating a true love and taste for music, so strengthening to the higher artistic tone and purpose of the musicians themselves,—none which has been so much a matter of true pride in Boston hitherto, as the concerts of a grand orchestra, in which the leading feature always is a symphony by some great master. The success of this class of concerts quickens all the others, which are at all worthy to succeed. Let the grand orchestra concerts go well, and we are pretty sure of a good musical season generally. Let these fail and the season will be dull, however many irons there may be busily turning (to small purpose) in the fire. First, therefore, in interest as in order, is the Second ORCHESTRAL CONCERT, at the Music Hall this evening. The impression produced a fortnight ago by the noble orchestra of fifty-four, under CARL ZERRAHN, and by the fine rendering of that glorious programme, will make hundreds eager to listen to an equally rich feast to-night. MENDELSSOHN'S 'Scotch' Symphony is always a favorite; BEETHOVEN'S *Leonora* is about the grandest of overtures; the overture to 'Tell' and the Finale to the 1st act of 'Don Juan' (including the Trio of maskers, the Minuet, the ball-room scene, &c., &c.) even in an orchestral arrangement, are always popular. This time not only the Romanza, the entire scena from 'William Tell,' including the duet, will be sung by Mrs. LONG and Mr. ARTHURSON; which, with the exquisite tenor aria from MOZART'S 'Magic Flute,' will make the vocal entertainment worthy of the instrumental.—At the urgent request of many music-lovers, who live out of town and who have no railroad accommodations in the evening, the Committee of the Orchestral Concerts have decided to give soon an afternoon performance, in which the Seventh Symphony and one or two other features of the first programme, together with some graceful music of a 'lighter order,' will be given at afternoon prices.

Next in order come the oratorios, to which three several societies invite us. We are only sorry that the excellent plan of uniting all three in the production of the 'Messiah' at Christmas time has failed. Meanwhile the opportunity is close at hand, even to-morrow evening, in the Tremont Temple, of hearing the 'Messiah,' as well as extracts from 'St. Paul,' performed by the MENDELSSOHN CHORAL SOCIETY, who have been signally successful in their productions of that sublime work heretofore. Their quartet of solo-singers, too, is quite superior, including Miss ADELAIDE PHILLIPS, for the first time in oratorio, besides Mrs. J. H. LONG, Mr. ARTHURSON and Mr. WETHERBEE.... The HANDEL and HAYDN SOCIETY announce for the same evening, for the fourth time, 'Solomon,' with Mr. MILLARD in the place of Mr. ARTHURSON; also the 'Messiah' for Sunday evening before Christmas, with Miss PHILLIPS, Mrs. WENTWORTH, Mr. and Mrs. LEACH and Mr. MILLARD.... Finally, on the evening of Christmas the 'Messiah' will be given a third time by the MUSICAL EDUCATION SOCIETY, with the aid of Mrs. WENTWORTH, Mrs. LONG (in 'Rejoice greatly,' 'I know that my Redeemer,' &c.), Miss TWICHELL, (contralto), Mr. ARTHURSON and Mr. PRATT. No one can complain that HANDEL is neglected here this winter.

At the Boston Theatre this week they have been giving what were once called 'English operas,' that

is to say, old-fashioned comedies and melodramas, in which action, scenery and startling surprises are the main thing, and the music merely incidental and subordinate, limited to a number of songs, which rather interrupt than interpret or help on the plot; and those mostly in the one character sustained by Miss ADELAIDE PHILLIPS, who certainly sings finely what she undertakes, and what with her good acting powers besides, constitutes about all the interest of the occasion. It is a solo vocal concert, (unless we count in a few wretchedly sung choruses, comic songs, &c., by members of the stock company),—a solo concert with a background of scenery and story. The fact that MALIBRAN, some thirty years ago, drew crowds by this sort of thing, before the taste for real opera was formed, was not good warrant that it would prove attractive now. The houses have been thin. Neither the scenery and stirring incident of 'The Devil's Bridge,' nor the farcical action of Sheridan's 'Duenna,' with all the well-sung medley of our fair contralto, seem to have created much enthusiasm.... We understand there is a Sacred Concert shortly to be given in the Rev. Dr. Putnam's church in Roxbury, under the direction of Mr. BAUMBACH, and with the aid of Mr. and Mrs. LEACH, Mr. ARTHURSON, Mr. L. H. SOUTHARD, the Quartet Choir of the church and an efficient chorus. Romberg's Cantata: 'The Transient and Eternal,' selections from the 'Messiah,' 'Creation,' *Stabat Mater*, &c., &c., will be performed.

Master PAUL JULIEN, with his violin, and little ADELINA PATTI, the singer, are engaged to appear at the Drury Lane theatre in London, next month.... Mr. BORRANI, late Basso of the Pyne and Harrison Troupe, has organized an English opera company, with Miss BEHREND as prima donna, and Mr. HARRISON MILLARD, tenor. They are soon to commence in Philadelphia, with Bristow's 'Rip Van Winkle.'

To those who seek instruction in piano-playing, Harmony, &c., we commend the card of Mr. PIERRE BERTHOUD, a modest, gentlemanly, thorough-bred musician, who was a pupil in the Conservatoire of Paris, and is master of its system, has taught successfully for two years in seminaries in Massachusetts, and has shown a clever talent as a composer, as we have before had occasion to notice.... Arrangements are in progress for the erection of the BEETHOVEN statue in the Music Hall, with appropriate musical festivities, the Choral Symphony, &c. But it will not be possible to complete the preparations in season for the birthday (Dec. 17) of the great composer.... Our Boston prima donna, Mme. ELIZA BISACCANTI (so we are informed through a letter from an American officer at Buenos Ayres,) lately made her debut in that city, triumphing signally over the opposing *claqueurs* in the interest of a prima donna who preceded her. All the Americans, the sailors, &c., took tickets, and though the *claqueurs* hissed and the orchestra played purposely wrong, succeeded in obtaining for her a fair hearing, and a general recognition of her merits.

The London *Musical World*, having completed the republication of our translation of OULIBICHEFF'S 'Review of the History of Music,' of course without credit, has begun in the same manner upon the Analysis of 'Don Giovanni.' We are happy to be of service, and congratulate the London editor upon his easy labors.... The grand scheme of a National Opera Company in London has fallen through.... Sig. SALVI, in consequence of the Verdi difficulty, has been deposed from the managership of the Italian Opera in Paris.

Advertisements.

CARD.

MR. PIERRE BERTHOUD, Professor of Music, graduate of the Conservatoire de Paris, pupil of Neumann, Maledon and other distinguished Musicians at Paris, begs to announce that he is now ready to take pupils in Boston, on the Piano, Musical Composition, Harmony, &c.

He is permitted to refer to Rev. Dr. E. N. Kirk, Boston; Prof. Agassiz, Prof. Guyot, Cambridge; J. S. Dwight, Boston. Mr. B. may be addressed at Nathan Richardson's, Oliver Ditson's, and Reed & Co.'s Music Stores, Boston, or at Alonzo Tripp's, Principal of the Young Ladies' Institute, now opening at 35 Centre street, Roxbury.

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PROGRAMME.

Part I.

1. Symphony No. 3, in A minor, op. 56, (Scottish Recollections,).....Mendelssohn.
2. Aria from 'Zauberflöte,'.....Mozart.
Sung by Mr. ARTHURSON.
3. Overture to 'Leonora,'.....Beethoven.

Part II.

1. Overture to 'William Tell,'.....Rossini.
2. Scena from second act of 'William Tell,' including
a. Romanza (by request), sung by Mrs. J. H. LONG.
b. Duet, by Mrs. LONG and Mr. ARTHURSON.
3. Finale from first act of 'Don Juan,' (Orchestra,).....Mozart.

Tickets Fifty Cents each, to be obtained at the usual places. Also, in sets of six, good for any of the remaining concerts, at \$2.50 per set.
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MENDELSSOHN CHORAL SOCIETY.

HANDEL'S 'MESSIAH.' (excepting only the least interesting portions,) and a selection of several gems from Mendelssohn's 'St. Paul,' will be performed on SUNDAY EVENING, Dec. 9, by the Mendelssohn Choral Society, at TREMONT TEMPLE. The Society will be assisted by Miss ADELAIDE PHILLIPS, Mrs. J. H. LONG, Mr. A. ARTHURSON, and Mr. J. Q. WETHERBEE, Vocalists; Mr. W. R. BABCOCK, Organist, and a full Orchestra, Mr. H. ECKHARDT, Conductor. Tickets 50 cents each, at usual places: also at the office of the Journal of Music.

MERRILL N. BOYDEN, SECRETARY.

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HANDEL'S ORATORIO, SOLOMON, Will be repeated for the last time on SUNDAY EVENING, Dec. 9, at the Music Hall, with the vocal assistance of Mrs. Leach, Mrs. Reed, Mrs. Hill, Mr. Harrison Millard, Mr. G. W. Pratt, and Mr. S. W. Leach. Tickets 50 cents each—may be obtained at the usual places. In consequence of the inclement weather at previous concerts, season tickets numbered 1, 2, and 3, will be admitted. Doors open at 6; to commence at 7 o'clock.
H. L. HAZELTON, Secretary.

THE MESSIAH AT CHRISTMAS.

HANDEL'S MESSIAH will be performed by the HANDEL AND HAYDN SOCIETY on SUNDAY EVENING, Dec. 23, at the Music Hall.

—ASSISTED BY—

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Mrs. E. A. WENTWORTH,
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